



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

almost invisible bug, in a heap of carrion, he can still think within himself, holding fast to the law of righteousness and love: "This is the infinite ladder of redemption over whose rounds of purity, penance, charity, and contemplation I may ascend, through births innumerable, till I reach a height of wisdom, power, and bliss that will cast into utter contempt the combined glory of countless millions of worlds, ay, till I sit enthroned above the topmost summit of the universe as omnipotent Buddha." *

ART. V.—*Introduction to the History of the Nineteenth Century.* By G. G. GERVINUS, Professor of History in the University of Heidelberg. From the German. With a Brief Notice of the Author, by the Translator. London: Henry G. Bohn. 1853. pp. 137.

GEORGE GOTTFRIED GERVINUS is fairly entitled to the Cisatlantic distinction of being a self-made man, assuming that our idea of self-manufacture is philosophically "adequate." He did not indeed enter the metropolis with three kreutzers in his pocket, and leave behind him as many millions. The development of his faculties harmonizes better with the genius of his country. From a retail mercer's apprentice, he came to be a Göttingen Professor in his thirtieth year; from a desultory reader, he came to be a philosopher in history. He had filled his professorship, however, but two years, when King Ernest, the English Duke of Cumberland, abolished the Hanoverian constitution, and demanded of the Göttingen Professors an oath of allegiance to his usurped absolute authority. Gervinus, with six others, protested against a proceeding so

* Those who wish to have fuller authorities for the foregoing statements, or to pursue the subject further, will find the following references useful. Hardy's "Manual of Buddhism," Chap. V. Upham's "History of Buddhism," Chap. III. Beausobre's "Histoire du Manichéisme," Livre VI. Chap. 4. Helmont's "De Revolutione Animarum." Richter's "Das Christenthum und die ältesten Religionen des Orients," §§ 54–65.

clearly illegal, and in consequence three of the seven, including himself, were not only deprived of their professorships, but banished from Göttingen. In 1844-45 he was appointed Honorary Professor of History at Heidelberg, and his translator informs us that a prodigious sensation was excited by his lectures on the political state of Europe. In the revolution of 1848, though he had been a leader among the constitutionalists, he was influential in the offering of the imperial crown to the king of Prussia in pursuit of the chimerical scheme of the revived German Empire, — an error of which he afterwards repented.

The published writings of Gervinus comprise two volumes of "Miscellaneous Essays," "The History of Literature in Germany up to the Death of Goethe," a short apologetic treatise on the Reformed Catholic Church, a work on the writings of Shakespeare, and the pamphlet under review.

This latter had hardly appeared when its matter was condemned as high treason by most of the German governments, and on February 24, 1853, Gervinus was indicted and brought to trial for "having published a work directed against *constitutional* monarchy, with the intention of deposing the lawful head of the state and of changing and endangering the constitution; thereby rendering himself amenable to the charge of disturbing public tranquillity and order, and incurring the guilt of high treason." In his defence Gervinus contended that the charge was not against *him*, but against the "facts in history," and if it were urged that the treason lay in his individual narrative of these facts, that his "Introduction" was not a political pamphlet, but the result of the philosophical studies of many years; that these opinions could not be separated from his collation of historical facts; and that a condemnation would compel him to a renunciation of his vocation or his country, both of which, he suggests, he has not unworthily served. He proceeds to say: "My book is on so strictly a philosophical plan and treats of such comprehensive historical questions, that, properly, no judgment of any value could be pronounced upon it but by professed historians, of whom there are not two dozen in all Germany. Among them there has not to this hour been found one competent to give an

opinion in a few weeks on a book which is the fruit of half a life. On the other hand, there was soon a whole set of fanatical partisans and obstreperous bunglers in a neighboring press, who in eight days had condemned this work, in some instances by calling it an historical commonplace, and in others, a political pamphlet, with destructive tendencies." But Gervinus's defence, reasonable as it seems, availed him little. They who were wiser in their generation than he, whose intuitive omniscience so happily substitutes what they think *ought to be* for what to finite perception *is*, accomplished his proscription. He suffered the common penalty of the German law, four months' imprisonment, and his work was ordered to be publicly destroyed.

The style of the Introduction, to our individual taste, is excessively dull, and this peculiarity may be, for aught we know, the best of testimony that the translation is faithfully executed. And, *à propos*, may we ask why dulness should be considered more pardonable in history than in other literature? It is not indispensable to historical accuracy or to sound philosophy, facts are not necessarily platitudes, and the most brilliant style may convey the most important truths. If Gibbon and Macaulay are unfair and unreliable, it is not because they are imaginative or gorgeous, but because one was a sceptic and the other is a politician; *style* has nothing to do with their prejudices. We candidly confess that we much prefer a writer who occasionally performs on stilts to one who is perpetually floundering in the mud.

The translator obtrudes none of his own opinions, although evidently a sympathizer of that comprehensive species which takes to its capacious bosom democracies and "peoples" of every race and tongue, whether it finds them at one another's throats, or harmoniously conspiring for a general overturn. In but a single instance do we detect his hobby. Alluding to the diminished influence of individuals, whether in the position of rulers or in private life, Gervinus says that "no really pre-eminent mind has stepped forward to attract the particular attention of contemporaries since Napoleon, — no really great character has appeared to take up the cause of the people or to become the champion of the struggles of the age." The

translator in his note at the end of the volume asserts that Gervinus has not done justice to the Hungarian movement of 1848-49; and he furthermore produces a document from "General Georg Kinetz," which certifies that Kossuth is the champion of the age. Without disparaging any of the very numerous revolutionary leaders, who, we understand, are not fond of admitting individual claims to pre-eminence, we may venture to say that neither Gervinus nor his translator is right; for by common consent among those in the habit of contemplating facts, however diverse may be their opinions of his policy at different times, the one man of the revolutions of 1848 is the present Emperor of the French.

The object of the elaborate historical work to which the pamphlet before us is the introduction, is concisely stated to be an attempt to discover the import and intrinsic meaning of events from the fall of the empire of Napoleon to the middle of the present century. The law of historical development is traced from the legends of the Grecian peninsula and its colonies to the present day, and an analogy to the primeval traditions of man is found in the history of the European states of modern times. The patriarchal king, the equestrian order, the people, find their counterparts in the Teutonic kings, the feudal nobility, and the democracy. When, moreover, a state has completed its term of civilization, the power retrogrades from the people or democracy, through aristocracy, once more to absolutism. The topics discussed in the first four sections are the leading events in the history of the Romanic and Teutonic nations, from the origin of the feudal system to the German War of Liberation, or, as Gervinus with doubtful propriety calls it, the "war of *freedom*." The salient points, of course, in the sketch of the Teutonic nations, are the Spanish monarchy, the Papal tyranny, the Reformation, and the American republic. France, under Henry IV. and Louis XIV., and the revolution of 1789, with its quarter of a century of consequent events, furnish the chief features for the philosophy of the Romanic nations. The fifth and last section, comprising a review of modern history, and occupying some twenty of the concluding pages of the work, is all that suggests anything of peculiar interest to American readers.

Gervinus more wittily than correctly says that the genius of Napoleon "had wrestled with the age, and that the age had conquered." The *sovereigns* of the age had indeed conquered, but the age itself rolled backward, and finds itself after a generation has passed away just where Napoleon would have left it, had the ideas which he brought from Elba (not those visions of glory which carried him to all the European capitals) been permitted a development. This was not to be. To conquer *him*, free constitutions were promised to all the German states, to Spain, Poland, Prussia, and even to France, — the country conquered for the Bourbons. Since then, another revolution, that of 1830, has failed, and after a rule of eighteen years, most of which were spent in attempting to consolidate and perpetuate his dynasty, a broken-down old man landed upon the shores of England, the last of a race which had governed France for a thousand years. The Republic, — anarchy, — the Empire, followed in rapid succession. In every country but France the revolution has failed. Prussia, Italy, Hungary, are all the worse for it. In none of the countries where revolution was attempted was the Republic an ultimate object. The revolution was a failure, not in the fact that the Republic was not established, but because constitutionalism was almost totally wrecked in the end. One grand result, however, has been obtained, that a people will hereafter not be molested by other governments for assuming the right to establish its own form of government. France has done this, and, instead of being compelled to fight for her life as before, finds herself even in a position to dictate a policy to other nations at least as powerful as herself.

We cannot refrain from alluding to a somewhat fanciful theory of our author, based upon a system of geometrical progression, as to the periods which are most likely to bring about freedom. For instance, the insurrection at Cadiz was five years after the Congress of Vienna; ten years afterward came the *Bourgeois* revolution of 1830; eighteen years after that, the popular revolution of 1848; therefore, according to this theoretical ratio, we are not to look for any more disturbances till about the year 1880 or 1890. Nervous old gentlemen, anxious capitalists, sanguine millennialists, may rest in peace

for at least another generation. Politicians and office-hunters will have to fall back upon the common principles of honesty and capacity, for their electioneering capital. Muskets and saddles at a "ridiculously low figure" will be a drug. But we are much more hopeful than this representative of German democracy, and cannot but feel confident that constitutions will again be quite generally established in Europe in a quarter part of the time assigned by him. The physical geography of freedom is traced by Gervinus with the same precision with which medical gentlemen map out the track of cholera, and the hand of Providence is piously recognized in every change. But while it is contended that a regular order of events is prescribed to the general course of history, there is no attempt to qualify one of the most incontestable and striking facts in historical philosophy, that, in the particular aspect of those events, "much is left to the arbitration of man, and ample space is allowed for the display of his various powers." "Whether the republic or the monarchy, the constitutional or the democratic form of government, will succeed must be decided by the degrees of capability in the contending classes, by their political power, and the wisdom or folly of their resistance." Gervinus thinks, too, that the grand development of this remarkable era will principally depend on two nations, — the French and Germans. It is important to note, as a European democrat's view of American prosperity, that the author is of opinion that a limit to our immigration, and consequently to our commerce, will be hastened by our refusing to permit our territory to be occupied by other nations, and that the result will be a renewal of the ancient commerce and civilization of Asia. These passages form an exception to the general vigor of the book, in being both puerile and obscure.

Having thus stated the leading idea of a German patriot and democrat, and one of a school of politicians which in that country is, very oddly, analogous to "sectionalism" in ours, the remainder of this article will be occupied with some reflections suggested by, though not identical with, the historical views of some of the most eminent students of modern history. It is quite obvious that no European writer, however pure his intention, can take the same view of European history as an

American republican. The history of the modern European states, from the American point of view, must yet occupy many of the most sagacious and industrious minds of our own country before it shall be fully or generally comprehended. This view is quite a different one from that of socialism, as we shall see. Socialism is an imperfect, unbalanced, though possibly a well-meaning attempt to appreciate absolute popular rights, or rather an assertion that all popular inclinations are absolute rights, — a doctrine disproved by philosophy, policy, and experience. America may be a final umpire in some future convulsion; it becomes us, therefore, now that the smoke of the battle is cleared away, to see if we can discover what has been fought for on either side, and with what apparent success, actual or probable.

Since the American and French revolutions of the last century, historical investigation has proceeded, with few exceptions, from a new stand-point. Republics are getting to be better appreciated. The classical student for centuries has adopted without inquiry the traditional notions of the baseness and weakness of the Athenian republic, its caprice, its ingratitude, and its ostracisms. Heeren has more philosophically presented an opposite theory. Modern history on the Continent has been biased by court favor, much more than even by the influence of the Papacy. In England it has generally taken its tone from the Anglican Church. Ecclesiastical history is inherently controversial, and so far unreliable; its vices are hypocrisy and misrepresentation, and so thoroughly is it impregnated by them, that men like Gibbon, Hume, and Voltaire have in disgust assumed a position painfully hostile to the great and incontestable truths of Christianity. The danger to the student now is, not from bigotry or scepticism, but rather from *political* intolerance and fanaticism, — a danger becoming greater with the growing extent of modern history. It is of more importance, therefore, that this period should be rightly understood, than that the events of other periods as commonly received should even be remembered. There are more guiding truths to be elicited since the date of the Puritan exodus under King James, than in the six hundred years which preceded it. Then for the first

time the Reformation emerges from the discredit thrown on it by its English champions, — the cruel and wicked Henry, the timeserving and vacillating Cranmer. It began then, too, to be perceived, that the Reformation, so closely allied to monarchies, reprehensibly erring indeed in its subservience to the passions of temporal princes, still contained the germ of republicanism. The complete failure of the attempt to establish it by fire and sword in Ireland contrasts fearfully with its peaceful propagation, under auspices harmonizing with its essential nature, in America.

The century closing with the present year has been especially rife with instruction. The expulsion of the Jesuits from France, that of the French from America, the subjection of our entire continent to Anglo-Saxon colonization, the two great revolutions, the partition of Poland, the decay of the Ottoman Empire, the rise and fall of Napoleon, the unparalleled growth of the United States, the Irish emigration, the growth of Russia, the Slavonic antagonism to Western civilization, the changes and struggles of 1848, and the present war in Europe, have each a lesson. But what nation improves by such lessons?

The importance of history has been underrated by many eminent men. Sir Robert Walpole said, "Read me anything but history; for that cannot be true." According to Dr. Johnson, it was necessarily false or dull. Napoleon, we believe, asked, "What is history, but fiction agreed upon?" It has its difficulties as a study in its errors as narrative. Treating mainly of antagonisms, international or partisan, the student is but too apt to fall into contemporaneous sophistry and perversion, and the writer cannot be, or does not care to be, impartial. With all the advantages of contemporaneous history, events cannot be completely or properly judged by the generation which witnesses them. If the history of the king is no longer that of the state, the history of *parties* is but the substitution of a new error for an old. The physiologist who is known to have a theory before he collates his observations, receives very little credit for them from his fellows. Now the minute analysis which has produced such gigantic results in the physical and natural sciences should be applied to historical research.

Something analogous to the microscope, the scalpel, or the test-acid must take the place of rhetoric, fancy, or prejudice. It should be considered as dishonorable to start from a preconceived theory in the philosophy of history, as in that of science. The link, if wanting, must not be supplied from the writer's brain.

The task of collecting perfectly reliable materials as data for an opinion upon events in Europe is almost hopeless. There is so much partisan dispute as to the institutions, so much international discrepancy as to the external relations, of a state, that perhaps the easiest and most satisfactory plan, after all, would be to follow the fashion of this country for a few years back, and to jump from one side to another according to what is called the "tone" of the diurnal literature of Great Britain. We take a single illustration of this difficulty in Alison's picture of the great contest between France and England at the commencement of this century. "In words of exalted eloquence, the British orator Grattan says, 'There has been a time when the Continent lay flat before our rival, when the Spaniard, the Austrian, the Prussian, had retired; when the iron quality of Russia had dissolved; when the domination of France had come to the water's edge; and when, behold, from a misty speck in the west the avenging genius of these our countries issues forth, grasping ten thousand thunderbolts, breaks the spell of France, stops in his own person the flying fortunes of the world, sweeps the sea, rights the globe, and retires in a flame of glory.' " As to the "eloquence," we yield without a murmur. We know of nothing in the entire range of the literature peculiar to the "American eagle" which we would venture to put against it, even before a committee of native Fourth of July orators. Another view, however, is, that from 1793 to 1815 England proved herself the enemy of the human race. To support this view, suppose that a French writer should assert, that when the aim of the revolution was accomplished, and the French nation panted for repose after its fearful struggle against its tyrants (not so much its king), English agents and English gold stirred up the Vendean insurrection, which ended in the desolation of the fairest part of France; that afterward, when the Continent desired rest from

a wicked and futile contest with a nation armed to the teeth and fighting for its life, the instigations and bribes of England sustained coalition after coalition, till the ease with which they were overthrown changed a struggle for life into a contest for the palm; that when France had acquiesced in the government of the First Consul, fifty or more vile wretches were landed in an English ship of war upon the coast of France, whose infamous plans of assassination were concocted in London, under the eye and with the connivance of its court; that when the bloody wars of which she was the soul had so devastated the Continent that it could no longer manufacture the implements of death, England became the armory of the world, and swept into her treasury the profits of the infernal traffic; that, upon one pretext or another, she destroyed the commerce of Europe, seized the distant colonies of France, Holland, and Spain, and turned the current of their almost illimitable wealth into her own harbors; and that, to prevent the possibility of a restitution of her ill-gotten gains, she abetted every scheme which had for its object the destruction of liberty. Now, so far as we are aware, no French writer has made precisely such charges as these, but the reader will find all the unquestioned facts upon which they are based in this very history of Alison, and *all but one* upon the very page which blazes with the "exalted eloquence" aforesaid! Here, therefore, is no partisan error, no intentional discrepancy, but a gross inconsistency in a single writer, and he one of the most eminent and honorable of his class. Contemporaneous history derives its value from the fact, that it paints the events of an era as they appeared to the actors themselves. But to be *true*, it must comprise the whole truth. If anything is suppressed, the history is false. Alison admits everything against his government, simply because his admissions prove nothing against his theory, which is that England was the chosen instrument in a predestined order of things to suppress what he calls democracy, at all hazards.

What is modern history? The arbitrary line which places its commencement at the date of the fall of the Western Empire leaves ancient history in a limited position, while it is every day overwhelming modern history with new events. To

make any relative proportion between the two, either the line must be advanced, or what is now called modern history must be subdivided. Voltaire, who, with all his errors as a philosopher and a religionist, was a profound politician and a most astute observer, divides the history of the world into four eras. (1.) That of Philip and Alexander, which produced the orators, statesmen, and artists of Greece. (2.) That of Julius and Augustus Cæsar, which gave the historians, actors, and poets to Rome. (3.) That which followed the capture of Constantinople by Mahomet II., and which under the Medici attracted to Italy what the Turks had driven from Greece. (4.) That which will yet be recognized in the history of the world, but not of the Anglo-Saxons, as the age of Louis XIV. Availing itself of the discoveries of the others, this age made more progress than all the others together. Art indeed advanced no further than under the Grecian, Roman, or Florentine eras; but the *mind* of man was liberated. Till that era, the nation which is now at the head of art and civilization deserved more than any other the name which the polished Italian gave to his ultramontane neighbors. France was pre-eminent in barbarism. Jews, Genoese, Venetians, Portuguese, Flemish, Dutch, English, in succession carried on the commerce of a nation which was ignorant of its very principles. The father of Louis XIV. did not own a single vessel. The literature of the country was nothing. What Louis the Great did for France, therefore, is to be judged by what he found her, and by our own ideas of refinement we shall find that it is unparalleled in the whole range of history. The long and splendid reign of Louis has come down to us in two points of view; — one, that which is presented by the English historians of the wars of the Spanish succession; the other, that of Methodism carried into politics. The value of the first suggests itself; as to the latter, neither the philosopher nor the historian has any concern with it. The private profligacy of courts has much less to do with the affairs of nations than the lovers of the marvellous imagine. The novelist may weave it into thrilling fiction; but the historian gathers few gems from the *Chronique Scandaleuse*. Among legitimate sovereigns, Catherine the Great and Louis XIV. have no peers. Even Louis XV. stands in a false light

to those who have not penetrated his diplomacy. Personally brave, attentive to business in all his financial embarrassments, sad in the midst of orgies, not seduced by power, full of contrasts, he should be looked upon rather as himself the victim of a frightful system, than as the precipitator of the Revolution.

The theorist has almost always fallen into the dominant error of attempting to solve the difficult problem of human government. Guizot's theory appears to better advantage in connection with certain propositions of Gervinus, than by itself. Government, under whatever form or name, may be resolved into very few abstract principles,—an established social restriction whose elements are law and obedience to law. Law represents the eternal principles of justice which are born with man, but do not die with him nor with centuries. They declare that his divine creation is not alone in the image, but with the essence of God, and are as lasting and unvariable as the laws of the physical universe. Obedience to law is the bond of society. Law is enunciated through human legislation, which includes the idea of an executive. Force is not, however, originally law, but that principle which repels individual deviation from law. With these data of law and obedience, and consequently force, man is left to his own discretion, and to the myriad diversities of climate, geographical position, and the age, to evolve from them a government. If the result of the process be true to eternal justice, he may call that government by any name he chooses. The evolution has always followed a certain natural succession. The patriarch is succeeded by the king, and after the king comes every shade of absolutism, constitutionalism, oligarchy, and democracy. The *origin* of states has the most direct and the strongest influence upon the evolution of government. The American republic was an inevitable result of our Anglo-Saxon descent, the training of our home governments, and the fearless independence of our fathers. A monarchy would have been an absurdity, a solemn sham. We honestly believe, on the contrary, that a republic can never *long* exist in a country with the traditions, antecedents, habits, and characteristics of the French. Radical faults will always exist both in

the administration and the people. It has twice failed, and a king in the mean time was dethroned without the idea of a republic having been for a moment seriously entertained. Nor is it likely that England—the only state in the Old World competent to carry on a republic—will again attempt the experiment so rudely interrupted by Cromwell. In its system of checks and balances, the monarchy is a safe and an agreeable fiction, with not so much available power as resides in the American President. The striking fact, therefore, that the royal family is almost purely German, has no effect upon an administration. It injures no one, while it is of incalculable benefit to the minor German courts, whose Protestantism is carefully nourished, and is handed down as an heirloom with the same pious regard as the family diamonds and the roulette-tables. The next king of England will have scarcely a drop of English blood in his veins; yet so lightly does the monarchy sit upon the nation, that there will probably be no diminution in that loyalty which now amounts to sincere affection towards one of the most unexceptionable of women. There is no more probability that England will change its form of government to one more liberal in name, than that America will change its theoretical democracy to a practical executive despotism.

No human government can be *perfect*; for this would imply that, besides the attributes of his Creator, man also possesses infinite wisdom in using them. The republic is supposed—in a misapprehension of the fact that man is to develop his government, not upon any abstract model; but upon eternal principles modified by his human relations—to imply at least *the ultimate* perfectibility of the human race. This is an absurdity, because the perfectibility of man excludes the idea of human government altogether, dispensing wholly with an executive force, which includes restraint and coercion. Republicanism has nothing to do with utopian communism. Small bodies of men may indeed so purge themselves of error and passion as to live together without legislation; but those bodies have been largely leavened with a refined education which of itself shows the artificial character of the system. The “natural man” is not a socialist. We see good

reason why our own republic may be perpetual, not *because* it is a republic, but because it comprises as adjuncts so many distinct means of preservation,—our whole system of education, open in its highest sphere to all,—our beautiful and instructive plan of municipal government,—our State sovereignties, harmonizing withal so essentially with their federal relations,—a culture by which the humblest citizen gradually becomes competent to understand, and perhaps to carry on, the government of a great nation. Deprive the republic of these supports, even of a single one of them, and we believe that a despotism would soon be erected on its ruins. Education takes on a higher responsibility here, therefore, than in Europe. It must tend to make good citizens. To instil error, fanaticism, and disloyalty into young minds is, in making bad citizens of them, to furnish so many arguments against the republic. So ardent a lover of liberty as Niebuhr had no confidence in the efficacy of institutions to confer or secure liberty where public virtue is declining. It is the *bad* citizen who paves the way to despotism. The fear of a few thousand Red Republicans, with their crude and pernicious impulses, enabled Louis Napoleon to overturn the government which tolerated them, and to establish the Empire. If our government ever becomes a military despotism, it will be because, of two evils, anarchy and executive tyranny, the majority of men prefer the latter. Political slang and word-banding neither make nor unmake a patriot. There should be no yielding for even a moment to charlatanry or fanaticism. That is a very shallow conviction which is abandoned because the ignorant do not comprehend, or the malicious pervert, its true meaning. Bad citizens will make the best government bad, and will in the end destroy it. This is one of the most important lessons of modern history, and if writers had attended to this point, rather than to the arrangement of their materials so as to support preconceived views, if not indeed to make the worse appear the better cause, history would be in higher repute.

Democracy even in America becomes modified with time. It can hardly be so pure as when the population was less, and the cities not so large and fewer. Centralization to some extent becomes a necessary evil. For protection there must be

a police, and even a military organization, which is the very essence of despotism, as despotism is its prime requisite. In a well-regulated community, the army, which ought to appear only in connection with the external affairs of a state, has no place. But it will sometimes happen that this strong arm of a commonwealth requires to be felt, or at least to be *seen*. It is not inconsistent with the purest ideal democracy, that a law should be enforced by means of a military, who are to preserve peace during the enforcement of law by proper officers. In such a society it is the *people* who make the laws, not a central tyranny. The people themselves *are* the government, only the charlatan and the demagogue attempt to separate them. The *people* have a right to demand that its will shall be respected, that its laws shall be enforced. To argue against this proposition is to deny the whole theory of republican institutions. In this view it is not necessary even that the military force should be what is called a "citizen soldiery"; the argument is just as valid with regard to national troops or a standing army. Law is as binding under one form of government as another, though penalties may differ in stringency. The nature of the law, or the character of the "institutions" which require laws sectionally obnoxious, has no place in a general argument like this. To recognize what *is*, to improve it or "reform it altogether," if we will, but while it exists to recognize its existence as an absolute fact not to be argued out of sight because it is opposed to this or that theory, would seem most in accordance with the practical tendencies of our age and country. Abstract theories belong to the scholasticism of the Dark Ages, and although we do not fall into the error of considering our own times as socially or intellectually, because mechanically, in advance of other centuries, we do think that they have no place in any enlightened age. Wisdom was not born with our generation, nor will it probably die with us.

Having considered some of the lessons of modern history in relation to the institutions which constitute the internal life of a state, and applied those lessons, rigidly perhaps, but we trust in all sincerity and earnestness, more especially to our own country, before we venture to speak of international

relations, let us rest upon one or two points connected with the internal life of other nations, to notice a few peculiarities without any attempt to explain them.

We shall find, first, as the most striking anomaly, that the weak states of Europe generally have constitutions, while the great states practically have none. We except England, which on an emergency of external circumstances, chameleon-like, assumes at pleasure the characteristic of absolutism, aristocracy, or democracy, according to the kind and degree of coercion necessary. How far, therefore, is constitutionalism a cause and how far a consequence in the external weakness or strength of a state? Constitutionalism may have, moreover, very singular affinities. For centuries England has regarded Austria as her natural ally, the one country being a type of constitutional governments, the other the embodiment of absolutism. This affinity obtained not only an alliance with Austria while a distant power was convenient as a military safeguard against France, which was a rival at hand, but during and since the French Revolution. And yet in all that time the institutions of one nation have never passed over into the other, even when their armies were fighting side by side.

It has been found that no reliable calculations can be made as to the ability of a country to carry on a war, founded upon its financial condition. Here, again, an apparently overwhelming debt injures the weak state, but stimulates the strong. England, with her debt of eight or nine hundred millions sterling, will scarcely feel the additional hundred millions, which is the least amount with which she can terminate the present war, with her immense navy. War is hardly more costly than peace, to nations with large standing armies. The hope of Mr. Pitt in his wars with France was the physical exhaustion of that country. Napoleon a few years later fell into the same error as to England. Compare the prosperity of both nations at the end with their condition at the beginning of the war twenty years before. The Austrian exchequer has for half a century been hopelessly bankrupt; yet that government never stood firmer or was more prosperous than at the Congress of Vienna. Still bankrupt in 1848, she found her-

self at war with a powerful neighbor in alliance with her Italian subjects, with a rebellion in every province and an insurrection in her own capital, and at this moment, we are assured by the personal observation of those who are no friends to Austria or her monarchy, that the present prosperity and strength of the empire have never been equalled. Since Frederic the Great, Prussia has not known what financial system meant.

This brings us to a consideration of the European balance of power. For more than a hundred years no political treatise has been written which has not recognized this principle, — a system created by Richelieu and so strongly illustrated in the wars against Louis XIV. Yet the germ of truth and justice in it has been very imperfectly developed. This system does not include *natural* balances only, or equality in territory, population, and wealth, but proportionate or compensative equivalents; such, for instance, as that advantage which her commerce and marine give to England, matching the population and armies of France. Lord Brougham maintained, in his unshrinking analysis of this principle, that a nation not only has a right to interfere with the external policy of a rival, but with the development of its internal resources, if thereby a first-rate power is likely to be created out of a primitively second-rate one. As English political economy never refers to anything but the advantage of England, America would afford her a fine opportunity to test this right of interference.

We have endeavored in the above reflections to present what we think is not only the true aspect of modern history, but the true spirit with which that history ought to be studied. The materials of modern history are accumulating so rapidly, that the most eminent professors of the study have by common consent declared it impossible for one man to get a competent knowledge of the facts of any considerable portion of it. Dr. Arnold, in his Inaugural Lecture as Regius Professor at Oxford, modestly says: "It is certainly no affected humility, but the very simple truth, to acknowledge, that of many large and fruitful districts in the vast territory of modern history I possess only the most superficial knowledge,

of some I am all but totally ignorant. I could but ill pretend to guide others where I should be at a loss myself; and though many might possess a knowledge far surpassing mine, yet the mere ordinary length of human life renders it impossible for any one to have that profound acquaintance with every part of modern history in detail, which might enable him to impart a full understanding of it to others. But yet it may be possible, and this indeed is my hope, to encourage others to study it, to point out how much is to be done, and to suggest some rules for doing it." And in another place he says: "I must often dwell on the value of a knowledge which I do not possess; and must thus lay open my own ignorance by the very course which I believe to be most beneficial to my hearers."

Judgment in the historian is better than a facility in aggregating facts. The study should be approached conscientiously, with no preconceived theory, no utopian scheme of final and absolute happiness through institutions alone. If there is anything in the philosophy of history more than a continual approximation, through human agencies, imperfect and changeable as they are, to a recognition of the proposition, that it is for man to solve the problem of human government with the data only of his own reflection of the Divine justice and truth, we have failed to perceive it. To assume that there is a central abstract idea of government, around which human affairs are revolving in continually approaching cycles, will be very apt to make us neglect the practical experience of those events. If the grand truths of humanity seem slow of development, let us still have faith in an overruling principle of good, independent of our imperfect efforts.